

Amendments to the Claims

1. (currently amended) A system comprising:
a device for coupling at least two medically applicable instruments, said at least two medically applicable instruments being coupled to at least two control apparatuses, said device comprising:
a central control unit coupled to input and/or output connections of said at least two control apparatuses, said central control unit including:
at least one processor which (i) receives output signals from the at least two control apparatuses and (ii) converts the output signals into a unified format; and
at least one processor which (i) receives inputted control signals, (ii) converts the control signals into formats corresponding to the respective at least two control apparatuses, and (iii) transfers the converted control signals to the at least two control apparatuses to control the at least two medically applicable instruments;
a central input device coupled to the central control unit via a bus; and
a central output display device coupled to the central control unit via a bus;
wherein the bus provides electrical separation between the central input device and/or the central output display device and the central control unit.
2. (currently amended) The ~~device~~ system as set forth in claim 1, wherein the central control unit includes at least one processor, ~~using~~ which converts different display information and/or image formats ~~can be converted~~ into a predetermined, defined image format.
3. (currently amended) The ~~device~~ system as set forth in claim 1, wherein the at least two control apparatuses coupled to the at least two medical apparatus are provided in a rack.
4. (cancelled)

5. (cancelled)

6. (currently amended) The system as set forth in claim 5 1, wherein the central input device includes at least one of a touch screen, a keyboard, a cursor control unit, a mouse, a joystick, a trackball, a foot switch, a touch pad and a speech input device.

7. (cancelled)

8. (cancelled)

9. (currently amended) The system as set forth in claim 5 1, further comprising a storage unit for storing data captured by the medical instruments and/or data inputted via the data input device.

10. (previously presented) The system as set forth in claim 6, wherein at least one device forming the system is mounted to a ceiling of an associated operating room.

11. (original) A method for operating at least two medical instruments, said medical instruments being coupled to and exchanging data and/or information with at least one control apparatus, said method comprising:

coupling the at least one control apparatus to a central control unit;
receiving output signal data obtained from the medical instruments, said output signal data being transferred via the at least one control apparatus; ~~and~~
converting the received output signal data into a unified format; and
transmitting the converted data to a single, central display device coupled to the central control unit;

wherein the single, central display device displays data from a medical instrument in one or more windows and/or displays data from different medical instruments in combination.

12. (currently amended) The method as set forth in claim 11, further comprising:
 ~~receives~~ receiving inputted control signals via the central control unit;
 converting the control signals into formats corresponding to the respective at least two medical instruments; and
 transferring the converted control signals to the at least two medical instruments via the at least one control apparatus, thereby controlling the at least two medically applicable instruments.

13. (cancelled)

14. (cancelled)

15. (currently amended) The method as set forth in claim ~~13~~ 12, wherein the central display device displays menus for operating the at least two medical instruments.

16. (currently amended) The method as set forth in claim ~~13~~ 12, wherein central display device includes an alarm display.

17. (cancelled)

18. (cancelled)

19. (new) The system as set forth in claim 1, wherein the central input device and the single, central output display device are comprised of a single touch screen display.

20. (new) A system comprising:

a central control unit coupled to input and output connections of at least two medically applicable instruments via at least two control apparatuses;

a single, central input and output display device coupled to the central control unit via a bus, wherein the bus provides electrical separation between the single, central input and output display device and the central control unit.

21. (new) The system as set forth in claim 20, wherein
the central control unit includes at least one processor, which converts different display information and/or image formats into a predetermined, defined image format;
and

the single, central input and output display device displays from different medical instruments in combination in one or more windows.

22. (new) The system as set forth in claim 21, wherein the single, central input and output display device is comprised of a single touch screen display.

23. (new) The system of claim 21, wherein the central control unit includes:
at least one processor which (i) receives output signals from the at least two control apparatuses and (ii) converts the output signals into a unified format; and
at least one processor which (i) receives inputted control signals, (ii) converts the control signals into formats corresponding to the respective at least two control apparatuses, and (iii) transfers the converted control signals to the at least two control apparatuses to control the at least two medically applicable instruments;